

WINTER 2025 NEWSLETTER



HEALTH & WELLNESS

Integrating Innovative Health & Wellness Programming Year-Round

At Boys & Girls Clubs of the Twin Cities (BGCTC), programming that promotes the health and wellness of all Club members is a key component of our holistic approach to youth development. BGCTC’s Healthy Bodies & Healthy Minds program creates a culture of wellness to positively impact the health and wellbeing of the young people we serve.

Even over the winter months, Club youth discover innovative ways to nurture and foster their wellness journeys. Whether exploring new fitness programs, or practicing self-care, the Clubs offer youth opportunities to stay active, build healthy habits, and boost confidence—no matter the season!



PROGRAM MODEL

PHYSICAL HEALTH

Educating on good nutrition, teaching life skills of gardening and cooking, building good physical activity habits

MENTAL HEALTH

Creating safe space to express emotions, encouraging healthy coping mechanisms, promoting positive social connections, providing opportunities for seeking professional help when necessary

INTERPERSONAL HEALTH

Fostering open communication, encouraging positive peer relationships, ensuring young people feel safe, valued, and connected to their community and peers

ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH

Educating on awareness of personal environment, environmental issues and their impact on health, fostering connection with nature and hands-on learning opportunities that prioritize environmental sustainability



Our North Star

All Members on track for a successful future beyond high school graduation

BGCTC's Health & Wellness strategy develops young people's capacity **TO LIVE HEALTHFULLY** by educating youth about fitness, nutrition, and smart health decisions. Activities focus on instilling positive conflict resolution techniques, encouraging positive behaviors, setting personal goals, and building resilience skills that nurture and strengthen kids' minds and bodies. BGCTC approaches this strategy in a variety of ways...

Promotes Healthy Movement

NEW AQUATICS PROGRAM MAKES A BIG SPLASH FOR CLUB KIDS

Opening a Club location within a sports center comes with great benefits. At the John Hardeman III Boys & Girls Club, youth enjoy access to an on-site indoor swimming pool, offering a unique opportunity to build confidence in the water. Through V3 Sports' aquatics program, Club members dive into weekly swim sessions, strengthening their abilities, while having fun as they develop an important life skill.



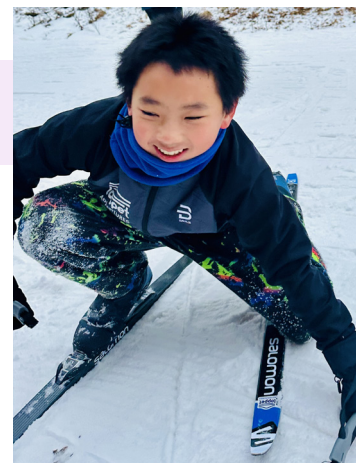
BUILDING CONFIDENCE THROUGH MASTERING BOXING FUNDAMENTALS

In partnership with the Northside Boxing Club, youth at the Jerry Gamble Boys & Girls Club are strengthening their bodies and minds. Three days a week in Boxing Club, trainers and youth target multiple muscle groups, improve coordination and spatial awareness, and boost cardiovascular fitness. This unique partnership offers Club youth the opportunity to explore new ways of moving their bodies while also learning about self-discipline, confidence, and compassion.



EMPOWERING YOUTH THROUGH OUTDOOR ADVENTURES

This winter, the Loppet Foundation has been connecting Olson Middle School Boys & Girls Club youth to the great outdoors. From hiking to cross-country skiing to snowboarding, youth have the opportunity to discover new ways to grow and challenge themselves through fun and adventurous experiences that teach them balance, coordination, agility, and confidence. The Loppet Foundation also generously provided winter gear to all participants to ensure youth have the proper outerwear to stay warm, safe, and fully enjoy their outdoor experiences.



Teaches Healthy Nutrition and Cooking Skills

FROM SEEDS TO HARVEST – GARDEN PROGRAM TEACHES PLANT SCIENCE AND NUTRITION

Over the past few years, the staff at BGCTC's Voyager Environmental Center and Club has been developing the Voyager Garden program. From spring to fall, Club youth grow and prepare their own food while learning about plant science, conservation, and sustainable land management practices. During the winter months, they escape the Minnesota freeze by creating a tropical biome in their very own greenhouse.

As they prepare for the 2025 garden, Club youth have created garden maps and discussed which fruits and vegetables they would like to grow. They have also been setting up indoor growing experiments to learn about plant needs. They are very excited for this year's growing season!



CULINARY CONNECTIONS WITH PILLSBURY UNITED COMMUNITIES

Cooking isn't just about delicious food, it's also about teamwork and togetherness. This winter, volunteers from Pillsbury United Communities have been facilitating Cooking Clubs (and connection) at two BGCTC Club locations – Olson Middle School Club & Camden High School Club. Through food preparation, Club Members are learning how to work together and make time for meaningful conversations. These Cooking Clubs have proven to be so popular that some Club youth are even offering to do the dishes just to be part of the fun.

COOKING CLASS WITH HAKEEM: A RECIPE FOR TEACHABLE MOMENTS



Hakeem, Program Director at the Southside Village Club, has been helping Club youth make healthy food choices by exploring alternative recipes for classic dishes during cooking class. Club youth from all grades are joining in on the fun as they experiment swapping out ingredients that yield healthier outcomes. Some of the recipes haven't gone as planned, but those offer teachable moments sparking creativity, problem-solving, and a chance to laugh and learn from mistakes in the kitchen.

Develops Healthy Relationships and Promotes Mental Wellbeing

FRESH PERSPECTIVES LEAD TO POSITIVE OUTCOMES FOR CLUB YOUTH

In partnership with the Little Earth Residents Association (LERA), the Little Earth Club has been implementing a new approach to support the mental wellbeing of the youth they serve. Club youth in grades 6-12 have been coming together once a week to practice positive affirmations and explore alternative perspectives that can help to reframe their life experiences. For instance, “I can’t do this” can transform into “this is challenging for me.” Both LERA and Club staff have been impressed by the high-level of participation and the openness of Club youth in expressing their feelings.

Turning
Negative Talk
↳ Into ↳
Positive Talk

BUILDING HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS THROUGH SELF-CARE

BGCTC’s Teen Pathways Manager, Erika Hulleman, and a dedicated volunteer from Sezzle, a financial technology company headquartered in Minneapolis, have been creating a nurturing and supportive space for girls at the Southside Village Club. Once a week, Club members in grades 5-12 come together to focus on self-care, emotional well-being, and life skills. In each session, they explore tools for building resilience, fostering healthy relationships, and the importance of prioritizing self-care. It’s a space where they can be themselves, share experiences, and build lasting connections with others who understand the challenges they face.



ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT Nomon Manneh

Nomon is currently in her sophomore year at North Carolina Central University in Durham, NC, pursuing a career in healthcare. Nomon is the first person in her household to attend a university outside of her home state of Minnesota.



How did your Club experience prepare you for your post-secondary pursuits?

From my experience, the Club has played a crucial role in helping me pursue university by providing mentorship, resources, and a supportive community. Through the career fairs and college preparation workshops, I gained valuable guidance on the admissions process, financial aid, and scholarship opportunities. Additionally, leadership and extracurricular activities at the Club helped me develop confidence, communication skills, and a strong work ethic, all of which have prepared me for success in higher education.

How has your Club experience impacted you and contributed to the person you are becoming?

My experience at the Boys & Girls Club has had a profound impact on my growth, shaping me into a more confident, responsible, and driven individual. Through the supportive environment, I have developed leadership skills, learned the value of teamwork, and built lasting relationships with mentors and peers who inspire me to strive for success. The Club has given me a safe space to explore my interests, overcome challenges, and set goals for the future. Because of this experience, I am becoming a more resilient and compassionate person, ready to make a positive difference in the world.

Growing Strong

Healthy Bodies, Healthy Minds

Join us in strengthening the health and wellness of BGCTC youth—now and in the future—by contributing to **GROWING STRONG** running now **through March 31, 2025**. Visit boysandgirls.org/growing-strong to learn more, read inspiring stories, and make a lasting impact through a recurring monthly gift.



Get Involved with the Clubs!

Volunteer

boysandgirls.org/get-involved/volunteers

- 1 Committed volunteers help magnify the impact of the Clubs.

Become a Corporate Partner

boysandgirls.org/corporate-partnerships

- 2 Corporate partners help advance the BGCTC mission and provide ongoing support.

Make a Recurring Gift

boysandgirls.org/give

- 3 A recurring monthly donation, no matter the amount, is a powerful investment in the next generation.

Join Our Team

boysandgirls.org/get-involved/careers

- 4 Make a difference by helping youth reach their full potential.



SAVE THE DATE



GREAT FUTURES FAIR

NEW DATE: April 4, 2025
 Jerry Gamble Boys & Girls Club
boysandgirls.org/great-futures



April 25, 2025
 The Depot Minneapolis
boysandgirls.org/for-the-kids